

March 4, 2021

Dear Chairman Abney and House Finance Committee Members,

My name is Rick Butler, I live in Pawtucket and work at a nursing home in East Providence. I've been a CNA for about 3 years. I became a CNA because I feel like I can make a difference for others. The type of person I am and what I can bring to the table for my peers and the elderly as well, I bring love, caring, devotion, and also to meet their standards of every day living ability. My residents know I have their backs and that gives them hope to get through.

I work nights, and you might think the residents sleep through the whole night, but that's not true. The residents still need us at night. When we work short, it is extremely hard and challenging. Some nights, we have 41 aides with just 2 CNAs. It's really difficult. One time, I was taking care of a resident and a call light was going off in another room. I went to her to answer her call light, she said she had to go to the rest room. I was helping another resident, and I can't be in two places at once, as much as I try. So I told her to hold on, I'll be with her shortly. I rushed to finish the first resident, but by the time I got back, the resident had wet herself. She was upset and crying, and I felt so awful. I felt so bad about it, because I hate seeing her like that. I'm supposed to be there for her, it makes me feel like I'm not doing my job. I wanted her to know I am there for her and I don't want to make her feel neglected. It's very upsetting to have a resident feel like they're lesser then or neglected or nobody cares. And this kind of thing happens when we don't have the staffing we need.

When we have 3 aides, we only have 14 residents instead of 21. We have time to do other things for the residents, not just vitals and charting, but we can check on our residents more often, do rounds so they don't need to wait so long for the bathroom or water or a snack, make their beds, take out their trash, all that stuff. When I need help, if two call lights are going at the same time, I can rely on my coworkers. It's still tough, we still need to work hard, but we can help one another. It helps a lot and the residents feel like we care more because we can give them what they deserve.

Our job is supposed to be to care for people. It's not supposed to break us down physically and mentally. When we work short, that's what it does. It breaks us down and the residents suffer. That's why we need the Nursing Home Staffing and Quality Care Act. **I became a CNA to help people, to have my residents' backs. I need you to have our backs.**

Thank you,

Rick Butler, CNA

Pawtucket, RI